



Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners
(ACCESS for ELLs®) English Language Proficiency Test

2012 INTERPRETIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of the Summary: This Interpretive Summary provides basic information about the scores on *ACCESS for ELLs*, the WIDA Consortium's English language proficiency test. The full *2012 ACCESS for ELLs Interpretive Guide for Score Reports*, which details each score report and gives suggested uses of assessment information, may be downloaded from www.wida.us.

ACCESS for ELLs is based on the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards. The main purpose of the test is to help educators, parents, and students better understand a student's development of English language proficiency on an annual basis. It also contributes to state accountability reporting.

Scoring: ACCESS for ELLs assesses the language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Listening and Reading skills are assessed through multiple-choice questions. The Speaking section is adaptive and is assessed through a scripted face-to-face interaction. Speaking is scored locally by the test administrator using the Speaking Rubric. For Writing, students receive three or four tasks, depending on the tier of the test form. With the exception of Kindergarten, Writing is centrally scored at MetriTech, Inc. by trained raters using a six-point rubric. Kindergarten writing tasks are scored by test administrators with a grade-appropriate version of the Writing Rubric. Total raw scores for all grades are converted to scale scores and proficiency levels for reporting.

Scale Scores: Scale scores are calculated and reported for each of the four language domains and four composite scores. They are then interpreted and reported as English language proficiency level designations. Scale scores allow test scores across grades and tiers to be compared on a single vertical scale from Kindergarten to Grade 12; the lowest possible scale score is 100 and the highest is 600. This scale allows scale scores across grades to be compared to one another *within* any of the four language domains—Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. There is a separate scale for each domain, so scale scores cannot be compared across domains. In other words, a scale score of 300 in Listening is *not* the same as a scale score of 300 in Reading.

Scaling takes into account differences in difficulty as students within a grade level cluster move across tiers. Tier A, for example, contains easier questions than Tier C. Through scaling a student who gets 10 questions correct in Listening, for example, on the Tier A form will receive a **lower** ACCESS for ELLs scale score in Listening than a student who gets 10 questions correct in Listening on the Tier C form.

Scaling also takes into account differences in difficulty as students move across grade level clusters. For example, a student in grade 5 who gets 10 questions correct in Listening on the grade cluster 3-5 Tier B test will receive a **lower** scale score for Listening than a student in grade 6 who gets 10 questions correct in Listening on the grade cluster 6-8 Tier B test.

The following is information on how the composite scale scores are derived:

Oral Language: The Oral Language score is a combination of the Listening and Speaking scale scores, with each contributing 50% to the total.

Literacy: The Literacy score is a combination of the Reading and Writing scale scores, with each contributing 50% to the total.

Comprehension Scale Score: The Comprehension scale score reflects students' understanding of oral and written English. It is weighted based on the scale scores of Listening (30%) and Reading (70%), rounded to the nearest whole number.

Overall Scale Score: The Overall or composite scale score is weighted based on a student's scores in Listening (15%), Speaking (15%), Reading (35%), and Writing (35%), rounded to the nearest whole number. The scores are weighted to reflect the importance of literacy to academic success.

The same Overall scale score can represent two very different student profiles. For example, one student may be very strong in Listening and Reading, but weaker in Speaking and Writing, while another student with the same Overall scale score may show strength in Speaking and Writing, but not in Listening and Reading.

If a student is missing a scale score in any of the four language domains, all applicable composite scores will NOT be calculated.

Proficiency Level Scores: The proficiency level scores are *interpretations* of the scale scores to describe student performance in terms of the six WIDA English language proficiency levels (1-Entering, 2-Beginning, 3-Developing, 4-Expanding, 5-Bridging, and 6-Reaching). Each language proficiency level is briefly defined in the reports. Proficiency Level Scores in the Parent/Guardian Report are represented by bar graphs; in the Teacher Report, they are presented as whole numbers followed by a decimal. The whole number indicates the student’s language proficiency *level* based on the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards. The decimal indicates the *proportion* of a level the student’s scale score represents, rounded to the nearest tenth.

To account for maturational differences, proficiency level scores are grade specific, meaning, for example, that a scale score of 300 in Reading for a 3rd grade student will be interpreted as proficiency level 3.0 while the same scale score for a 5th grader taking the same test would be 2.0.

The Proficiency Level Scores in the four individual language domains and combinations of domains offer a profile of student performance. This information, along with WIDA’s Performance Definitions, CAN DO Descriptors, and English Language Proficiency Standards, help determine the most appropriate instructional strategies for English language learners.

TEACHER’S REPORT ONLY

Confidence Bands: While ACCESS for ELLs is a reliable and valid test of English language proficiency, it—like all tests—is subject to a small degree of measurement error. Therefore, if a student could take the same test repeatedly, we would expect the student’s score to fluctuate slightly. This fluctuation can be quantified by the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM). The SEM is represented graphically by the Confidence Bands around the student’s true score. These bands, which correspond to the scale score, not the proficiency level scores, illustrate a student’s possible range of performance with a 95% probability of accuracy. See the *2012 Interpretive Guide for Score Reports* for more information.

Performance by WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards: Student performance on each standard is provided based on raw scores on the different parts of the test. Raw scores report the number of items or tasks the student answered correctly out of the total number of items or tasks. It should be noted that the absolute number of items a student sees in any given standard varies by tiers and grade levels. Raw scores cannot be compared across grade level clusters or across tiers within a grade level cluster and should be used with caution. However, because the Writing scoring rubric is based directly on the six proficiency levels of the WIDA ELP Standards, scores on the writing tasks reflect a common meaning across tiers and grade levels (with developmental differences taken into account).

Comprehension (Listening and Reading): The Comprehension table shows the number of questions related to each standard on the Listening and Reading sections and how many questions have been answered correctly.

Speaking Tasks: This table shows the number of tasks for which the student met or exceeded task level expectations for the given standard(s) as defined by WIDA’s Speaking Rubric.

Writing Tasks: This table shows the number of points the student received for each of the three components of WIDA’s Writing Rubric: Linguistic Complexity, Vocabulary Usage, and Language Control.

The Speaking and Writing rubrics are available to download on the WIDA website or in the full *Interpretive Guide for Score Reports*.

STUDENT ROSTER REPORT, SCHOOL FREQUENCY REPORT, AND DISTRICT FREQUENCY REPORT

The **Student Roster Report** lists scale scores and proficiency levels for Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing as well as for Oral Language, Literacy, Comprehension, and the Overall Score for students by grade and tier.

The **School and District Frequency Reports** indicate the number of students and percent of total tested for Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, Oral Language, Literacy, Comprehension, and Overall Score by proficiency level for each grade within a school or district. Also included are the highest and lowest scale scores obtained for each language domain as well as the total number of students tested.